

Study on Public Library Service in Sri Lanka under IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Mission Statement: Based on Polonnaruwa district

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Abstract

Public libraries are a worldwide institution. They exist in different societies with different levels of growth and cultures. As they operate in different contexts, the service provided and the style of providing the service varies. Public library services should operate modern and appropriately, as indicated by the 2022 IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Performance Facts. Through this survey, it was studied that public libraries in Sri Lanka conduct their services based on the performance facts stated in this mission statement. In the study, the awareness of public librarians about the performance facts stated in the mission statement and the level of operation of these facts in public libraries were examined. 07 librarians of main public libraries under the 07 Pradeshiya Sabhas of Polonnaruwa district were used as the study sample. Questionnaires and open interviews were used to collect primary data and the secondary data were obtained using printed and electronic sources. According to the data of this survey, the awareness of the public librarians on the performance facts mentioned in the IFLA/UNESCO was at a minimum level. Libraries face several issues and challenges when they apply those performance facts for their services, such as staff training issues, physical problems, poor reader and staff attitudes and further identified library services in the public library system of Sri

Lanka are very minimally implemented. According to the survey data, among the public libraries selected as the sample, the level of awareness about IFLA/UNESCO public library performance facts is about 57%. 45% of library staff possessed degree or diploma qualifications in library science. As a result, they face many difficulties in providing their services that have greatly affected the service quality improvement. To successfully implement the IFLA/UNESCO performance facts for public libraries, the library services offered by those libraries should be well-planned and implement international standards and guidelines.

Keywords: *IFLA/UNESCO Public library manifesto, Public libraries, Library services, Library standards, Library management.*